INSTALLATION AND USER GUIDE

for the PM GEMS Software,

Magenta, Red, Yellow, Blue and Green levels.

In this PDF version of the manual, links are shown in blue:

Contents
Essential information

THOMSON NELSON™

PM Gems Software: Magenta, Red, Yellow, Blue and Green levels

First published 2007 jointly by

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Printed by ABC Printing, Milton, Queensland.

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This manual deals with the Magenta, Red, Yellow, Blue and Green levels of the PM Gems Software, and with both the Windows and Macintosh versions.

Examples are taken from the Red level, and illustrations show the Windows version running under XP.

In the PDF version of the manual, links such 'Contents' are shown in blue.

Contact details:

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Email: **support@greygum.com.au**
Web site: **www.greygum.com.au**

For information about the PM Gems books, please contact Nelson Australia:

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Web site: **www.thomsonlearning.com.au**

Essential information

Installation

Details are given in the 'Installation' chapter (page 5), which contains information for **local installations** (page 6) and further suggestions for **networks** (page 7), but essentially you install this software just like any other software.

With **Windows installations**, you will be asked to choose a location for the program (executables and fixed data files), and another location for files to which the software writes — Warning: 'Program Files' and 'My Documents' are **not suitable** for this. For more details, refer to the 'Installation' chapter (page 5).

Once installed, the software runs **without needing the CD** to be in the CD drive.

On a **network**, a **supervisor** or someone with full network rights should install the software, register it, and set a teacher password. We strongly recommend that you install the software to the server **from a workstation**, rather than directly at the server itself.

Teacher password

Immediately after installation you should go into 'Teacher options' and set a teacher password. For full details, see page 11.

User groups

When the software is first installed, anyone can use it. The computer does not keep track of students' progress, because it does not know who is using the software. In due course it is likely that you will want to create one or more user-groups. The concept of user-groups and how to control them is explained in the 'Users and user-groups' chapter on page 3.

Settings

The software allows you to vary the settings, which control things like exactly which books, questions and activities are available, when the computer speaks the text, how the moving red underline behaves, and whether printing is permitted. The default settings are fine to start with, but later on you may wish to alter the settings. Each user-group has its own settings. Full details are given in the 'Teacher options' chapter, from page 14 onwards.

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Overview

What is the PM Gems Software?

The ***PM Gems*** Software consists of five packages, at the **Magenta, Red, Yellow, Blue** and **Green levels** (in ascending order of difficulty). Each software package features all ten of the ***PM Gems*** books for that level, and (except for the Magenta level) also includes two additional books from the ***PM Story Books***.

See **www.thomsonlearning.com.au** for full details of the entire **PM Library** range of books, teacher materials, software and other resources.

Reading

Students can **read each book** on the computer. The text and illustrations from the books are displayed page by page. Students can listen to the text being read (as pre-recorded speech, using an **Australian accent**), with an optional red underline that **highlights each word** as it is spoken, which encourages the student to follow the text and to associate each word with its sound and its meaning in context.

Writing

Students can **write their own version** of each story, and can **save** and (subject to the teacher settings) **print** their stories.

Questions

For each of the books, the software provides a number of **questions** that test both the students' **comprehension** of the story and their knowledge of its **vocabulary**.

Activities

Various activities are provided that deal with and reinforce the vocabulary and story for each book. These include **phonic spelling activities**, **sentence-completion exercises**, and other activities specific to the particular story.

Teacher facilities

In addition, the software includes many **teacher facilities**, including the ability to create **user-groups**, each with its own **settings** (which affect the difficulty and presentation of the software), and to **track the progress of each student**.

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Users and user-groups

What are users and user-groups?

The ***PM Gems*** Software includes facilities for keeping track of students' progress, but obviously the computer needs to know who is using the software! This can be achieved by having one or more lists of users.

It is important to understand this concept, and this chapter gives an overview of user-groups. There are essentially three different ways of using the ***PM Gems*** Software. These are to have:

- no record of who is using the software, or
- a single list of users, or
- several different lists of users.

The students on each list make up a 'user-group'. The possibilities are explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Public use without a user list

When you first install the software, the 'users' feature is disabled. This means there is no list of users at all. This has the advantage that the software is immediately available for use, and that anyone can use it — students are not asked to log in by name.

However, there is the disadvantage that students' progress can't be recorded, as the computer doesn't know who is using the software.

Having a single list of named users

You may at any time choose to enable the 'users' facility (described in detail on page 11 in the 'Teacher options' chapter). After enabling 'users', the teacher must type in the names of all the people who are to be on the list of users.

When this has been done, students are asked to select their name from the list of users whenever the software starts. As the computer now knows who is using the software, it is able to keep track of each student's progress, and the teacher can inspect the progress of any student at any time. It is, however, best not to have too many people on the list, as it becomes too long to be easily manageable. We recommend that, **at most**, one class forms a user-group.

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Having many groups of users

If the number of people using the software is too big to fit easily on one list, the next step is to create one or more additional user-groups.

A new user-group can be created using the 'Teacher options' (described more fully on page 18). The new user-group will have its own desktop icon (Macintosh and Windows) and start-menu shortcut (Windows only). If, for example, you are using the Red level software and the new user-group is called 'Fred's class', a desktop icon 'PM Red for Fred's class' will be created, and members of this group should use this icon (or the equivalent shortcut in the start-menu system) when they wish to launch the software.

After creating a new user-group, the teacher should exit the software, and then use the new shortcut to restart the software as a member of the new 'Fred's class' user-group. Initially, just like when the software is first installed, the 'users' facility for the new 'Fred's class' group will be turned off, so the teacher should go into 'Teacher options', set a password, enable the 'users' facility and type in the names of the users for this new group.

Any number of user-groups can be created. To start the Red level software, students in the 'Fred's class' group should use the 'PM Red for Fred's class' shortcut, and they will then be asked to choose their name from the list of users in this user-group. Equally, the teacher of this group, when inspecting progress, will see only the students from the 'Fred's class' user-group. (A network manager can even arrange that the 'Fred's class' shortcut appears only on the computers in the relevant classroom.)

By having several user-groups, each containing only a few students, it is much easier for students to find their own name when logging in, and equally it is much easier for teachers to manage their own group and inspect their students' progress.

Each group also has its own separate settings, so that teachers can choose different setting for different classes, to suit the age and ability of each class.

In some situations, you may want to have a number of user groups (for the various classes using the software), but you may also want to allow public access (perhaps so that guests or children from other classes can also use the software). To achieve this, create a new group with a suitable name like 'public use', but do not enable the 'users' facility for this group. Then anyone can choose the 'PM Red for public use' shortcut and, since the 'users' facility is not enabled for this group, students using this shortcut will not be asked to log in.

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Installation

Each of the ***PM Gems*** Software packages comes on a dual-platform CD suitable for Windows and Macintosh. Some of the following details vary according to which platform you are using. In such cases, please refer to the Windows or Macintosh section, as appropriate.

Greygum Software does not copy-protect its software, and it has on-approval and site licence policies that are more favourable to schools than is the case with many other software publishers. Please read through the sections on registration and licensing arrangements, and ensure that you and your educational institution comply with them.

Copyright and licensing

Software must be purchased before it may be installed or used, with the sole exception of software obtained on approval, which may be installed and run for evaluation and testing purposes only. If you decide against purchasing software ordered on approval, all copies and installed versions must be deleted from all storage devices when you return the original package.

If you have purchased one copy of the software, you may install and use the software on **one computer only**. You may not (unless you have a site licence) install the software on more than one computer, nor copy it onto a network.

In Australia and New Zealand, the purchase of two or more copies of a given package constitutes a **site licence**, and this allows you to install the software onto many stand-alone computers (Windows or Macintosh), and to install the software onto networks, **provided that all the computers with access to the software are owned or leased by the purchasing institution, and are permanently situated on a single campus of that institution.** There is no limit to the number of computers allowed to access the software.

If you wish to access the software on computers used off-site, or if you require a site licence for some other situation not covered by the above, please contact Greygum Software or your local distributor.

Site licence arrangements in other countries may be different — consult your local distributor or email us at Greygum Software for more details.

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System requirements

The CD is dual-platform, and contains both Windows and Macintosh versions of the software.

Images are designed for screens set to at least 24-bit or 32-bit colour (Windows) or 'millions of colours' (Mac). Acceptable but slightly reduced quality will be obtained with 16-bit colour (Windows) or 'thousands of colours' (Mac).

Older computers and computers with primitive video cards will have a substantially slower performance generally and poorer graphical effects when objects are dragged across the screen, but should still allow the software to run.

Windows

The Windows software is suitable for all 32-bit versions of Windows (such as Vista, XP, NT, ME, 2000, 98, 95), and all subsequent versions that are 32-bit compatible.

Macintosh

The Mac version is 'Universal' software that will run natively on both Intel and Power PC Macs. It requires Mac OS X, version 10.2.8 or later.

Installing the software

This section gives details about how to install the software for the first time to a single **stand-alone computer**. Later sections give **further details about installing on a network**. Once the installation is complete, you no longer need the CD in the drive for the normal operation of the software.

Please also refer to the text file 'README.TXT' (Windows) or 'Read Me' (Macintosh) on the CD for the most up-to-date information, which may supersede details given in either the printed manual or the PDF version of the manual.

Windows

A menu will usually appear a little while after you insert the CD. From this menu, click on 'Install now' to start installing.

If the menu fails to appear, you can start the installer by running SETUP.EXE on the CD, or from the 'Add or Remove Programs' item in the Control Panel. When the installer starts, follow the instructions that appear.

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You will be asked to specify a location for the program (the executables and the fixed program data); we recommend the 'Program Files' folder. You will also be asked for a location for the data files to which the software writes (such as those that record students' progress). Choose a location that is the **same for all users** of the computer, and to which all users have **write-access**. Suitable locations include somewhere inside 'Shared Documents' or 'Application Data'. Note that **'My Documents' and 'Program Files' are not suitable locations**, because they may be different locations for different users, or are unsuitable for files that get updated. Generally, the default locations suggested by the installer will be fine.

Macintosh

Mount the CD, then double-click on the 'PM Red CD' icon for the Red level software, and similar icons for the other colours. Then double-click on the 'Installer' icon, and follow the instructions that appear.

Registration

The first time you run the ***PM Gems*** Software, a dialog will appear asking you to register your copy by entering your name, or else to click on the 'Evaluation' button. If the software is on approval, you should not register it, and you may use it only for testing and evaluation purposes.

Once you have purchased the package, enter the name of the person or institution that has purchased the software. Make sure that your spelling is correct!

Please note that the registration process does not involve any codes or on-line authentication — it just stamps the software with the name of the purchasing institution, which is displayed in the main menu.

Installing on a network

You may not install the software on a network unless you have a site licence.

Please read the 'Installing the software' section first, then these additional notes.

The ***PM Gems*** Software is designed to work on a network — no special network version is needed.

We recommend that the installation should be performed **from a workstation** (rather than directly at the server), and that it should be undertaken by the **network supervisor** or a privileged user, who should remain at the workstation and run the software for the first time after installation. The supervisor should then register the software and set a teacher password.

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Windows

When asked for the location for the program files and program data, specify the location on your server where you normally store program files. As you are installing from a workstation, this name will normally be a UNC name (starting with something like \\server\...), and can be selected using the browser provided in the installer, by starting with 'My Network Places'.

For the location of the data files, remember that students need to write to these files during the normal operation of the software (because, for example, their progress is recorded in these files). **Choose a common network location to which all users have read-write access, and which is shared by all users. Do not choose a location that is different for different users.**

Macintosh

Install exactly as for a stand-alone machine, but specify a destination on the server.

Use from other workstations

To use the software from other workstations, no further installation is needed. The network supervisor should create shortcuts or icons (Windows) or aliases (Macintosh) on all workstations similar to the ones created during installation.

On **Windows** machines, be sure that both the 'Target' and the 'Start In' fields of each new shortcut are the same as in the original shortcut. For **Macintosh**, each new alias should point to the same data file 'PM Red' that the original alias points to (and similarly for other colours). See also 'Creating shortcuts' on page 19.

How to start the software

Windows

For the Red level software, for example, click on 'Start', 'Programs', 'PM Gems', and then click on the shortcut 'PM Red'. If several user-groups have been created for Red level, there will be several additional shortcuts with names such as 'PM Red for Fred's class'.

If you installed several of the ***PM Gems*** Software packages, there will also be similar shortcuts to the Magenta, Yellow, Blue or Green software and for any additional user-groups that have been created. Choose the appropriate shortcut.

Alternatively, double-click on the equivalent desktop icon.

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Macintosh

To start the Red level software, double-click on the desktop alias 'PM Red' , and similarly for the other colours.

If additional user-groups have been created, double-click on the appropriate desktop alias such as 'PM Red for Fred's class', but note that the creation of these desktop aliases is an option during the process of creating user-groups, so the aliases may not have been created.

If desktop aliases don't exist, navigate to the 'User_PGR' folder (for PM Gems Red level, and similar names for other colours) where there will be data files for each user-group, with names like 'PM Red for Fred's class'. This 'User_PGR' folder will be in the installation folder, unless you moved it elsewhere. When you have found this folder, double-click on the required data file to launch the software.

Text-to-speech engines

Nearly all the words and sentences that the computer needs to speak are pre-recorded. However, there are a few situations (such as the school's name or the users' names) where the words are unpredictable and so can't be pre-recorded. If the user clicks on these words, the computer will attempt to use any text-to-speech engine that may be installed to speak the word in question.

The text-to-speech engine is also used when students choose to **write** their own version of a story. When the student clicks 'Hear', the computer will use its text-to-speech facility to attempt to pronounce whatever has been written. You may feel that this helps and encourages students, but there is also a negative aspect to this (in that it rewards phonic spelling such as 'sed' for 'said'). Teachers can go into settings (part of the Teacher Options) and **enable or disable this facility** for hearing sentences using a text-to-speech engine when writing.

If your computer does not have text-to-speech facilities, no error will be reported; the computer will make no sound whenever there is no pre-recorded speech.

Windows: The software uses any compatible text-to-speech engine that may be installed on your system. Most recent versions of Windows, such as XP and Vista, include a built-in engine, but other versions may require you to obtain and install an engine.

Macintosh: To determine if you have Apple's Text-To-Speech installed, open your System Preferences and see if there is a 'Speech' control panel. If so, select the appropriate voice.

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Teacher options

How to access 'Teacher options'

Enter 'Teacher options' by clicking on the 'Teacher options' button, which is just below the 'Exit' button in the main menu (as shown in diagram *Teacher 1* on the right).

If the 'users' facility is enabled, users are asked to log in by name when starting the software. The 'Teacher options' button is available only if you log in using the TEACHER identity.

If a password has been set, you will be asked to give the password before you are allowed access to the main 'Teacher options' menu.

Remember that each user-group has its own separate teacher password. If you have forgotten the password, and the user-group contains students whose data you do not want to lose, please contact Greygum Software for help.

Teacher 1: buttons

The main 'Teacher options' menu

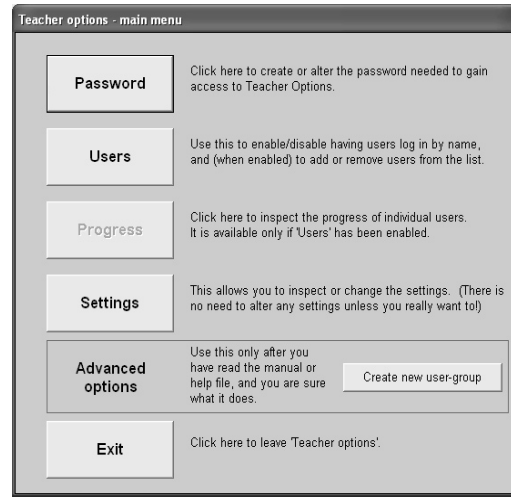
All teacher options are available via the menu shown in diagram *Teacher 2* on the right.

Each of the buttons leads to further options, described in the following sections.

Hitting the ESCAPE key always brings you back a level.

If you have several user-groups, remember that each group has its own separate settings.

You should always create a password, to avoid accidental or malicious misuse of the teacher facilities.


Teacher options - main menu
Password
Click here to create or alter the password needed to gain access to Teacher Options.
Users
Use this to enable/disable having users log in by name, and (when enabled) to add or remove users from the list.
Progress
Click here to inspect the progress of individual users. It is available only if 'Users' has been enabled.
Settings
This allows you to inspect or change the settings. (There is no need to alter any settings unless you really want to!)
Advanced options
Use this only after you have read the manual or help file, and you are sure what it does.
Create new user-group
Exit
Click here to leave 'Teacher options'.

Teacher 2: the main 'Teacher options' menu

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Teacher password

It is strongly recommended that you **set a password immediately** after you install the software or create a new user-group. If you don't, it is very likely that a student will gain access to 'Teacher options', and set a password that you don't know!

To set or alter the teacher password for a given user-group, click on 'Password' from the main teacher menu (shown in diagram *Teacher 2*).

Type in the required password, then hit ENTER or click on 'Finished' (see diagram *Teacher 3*).

To remove a password, click 'Finished' without typing anything in the box.

Teacher 3: creating a password

Remember that this password applies only to this particular user-group, and be sure to **keep a written record of the password**. If you forget the password, and the user-group contains student data that you can't afford to lose, please contact Greygum Software for assistance.

Managing users

To reach the 'Users' dialog (shown in diagram *Teacher 4* on the next page), click on 'Users' from the main 'Teacher options' menu.

When the software is first installed, or when a new user-group is created, 'users' is initially disabled. This means that the computer does not know who is using the software (so it can't keep track of individuals' progress). Anyone can use the software, and they are not asked to log in by name when the software starts.

To alter this, click on 'Enabled' (see diagram *Teacher 4*). You can then go on to add names to this user-group by clicking on 'Add user' and typing the required name. If you have quite a few names to add, try hitting the ENTER key twice after each name. (The first ENTER will add the name, and the second ENTER is equivalent to clicking 'Add user' so that you can type the next name.)

There is a maximum of 41 students (plus the teacher) in a single user-group. However, we advise you to try not to have more than two dozen or so students in any one user-group. Small groups are easier to manage, and make it easier for students to find their own name when they log in.

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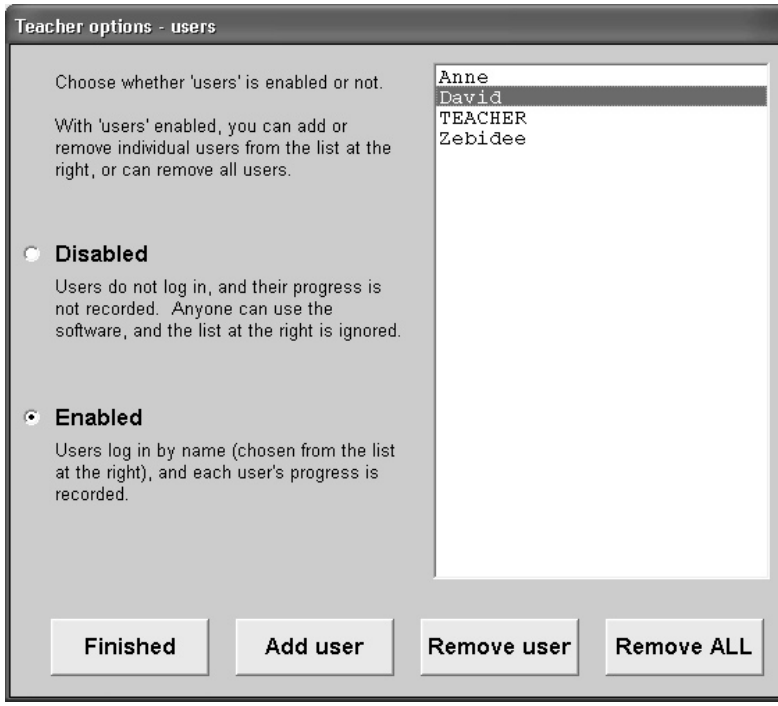
Teacher options - users
Choose whether 'users' is enabled or not.
With 'users' enabled, you can add or remove individual users from the list at the right, or can remove all users.
Disabled
Users do not log in, and their progress is not recorded. Anyone can use the software, and the list at the right is ignored.
Enabled
Users log in by name (chosen from the list at the right), and each user's progress is recorded.
Anne
David
TEACHER
Zebidee
Finished
Add user
Remove user
Remove ALL

Teacher 4: users

To remove a single user from the list, first click on the name to highlight it, then click 'Remove user'. To remove all users (for example, at the start of a new school year), click on 'Remove ALL'. Note that it is never possible to remove the user named TEACHER. (This user must always exist, so that access to 'Teacher options' is possible.)

Inspecting progress

To inspect students' progress, click on 'Progress' from the main 'Teacher options' menu. This will be available only if 'users' has been enabled (see page 11).

This facility gives you a summary of the progress of all students in this user-group, and also lets you inspect the progress of any individual student in detail.

Remember that different user-groups are totally separate. You can inspect progress only of members of the current user-group. To inspect a different user-group, you must exit the software and start again using the shortcut for that user-group.

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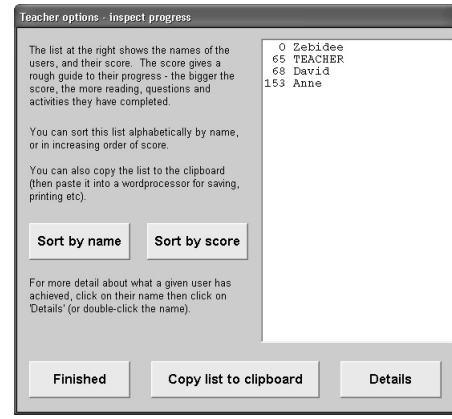
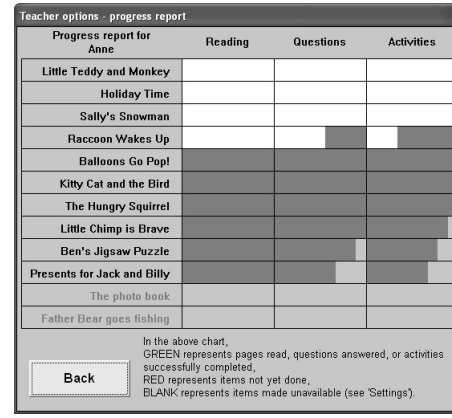
The main 'progress' window, shown in diagram *Teacher 5*, gives a summary of the progress of everyone in the group, by showing each student's score. This score is made up of one point for each page read, two points for each question answered, and three points for each activity completed.


Teacher options - inspect progress
The list at the right shows the names of the users, and their score. The score gives a rough guide to their progress - the bigger the score, the more reading, questions and activities they have completed.
You can sort this list alphabetically by name, or in increasing order of score.
You can also copy the list to the clipboard (then paste it into a wordprocessor for saving, printing etc).
Sort by name
Sort by score
For more detail about what a given user has achieved, click on their name then click on 'Details' (or double-click the name).
0 Zebidee
65 TEACHER
68 David
153 Anne
Finished
Copy list to clipboard
Details

Teacher 5: progress of all

This list can be arranged either in alphabetical order of name, or in numerical order of score. To keep a permanent record of these results, click on 'Copy list to clipboard'. You can then paste the results into your favourite text-editor or word-processor, from which you can print them or save them.

To inspect the details of a given user, click on the name, then click on 'Details' (or just double-click the name). This leads to a visual display of the individual's progress (diagram *Teacher 6*). Green (the light shade in the diagram) shows items completed, and red (the dark shade) shows items not yet completed.



Teacher 6: an individual's progress

If the teacher has disabled any items, they will be shown as blank. So in the diagram, books 11 and 12 have been totally disabled, and some of the harder activities for books 9 and 10 are also disabled. This student has completed books 1, 2 and 3, has read all book 4, and has done some of its questions and activities.

Note that the computer judges a page of a book to have been read as soon as the student looks at the page. So a student may in fact just have flipped past the page very quickly, without really reading it at all. However, the questions and activities all require some effort or a correct answer, so they give a better indication of a student's progress.

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Settings

This facility allows the teacher a great deal of control over exactly how the software behaves for members of a particular user-group. However, there is no need to adjust these settings unless you really want to — in most situations, the default settings are satisfactory.

Because the settings apply to the whole of the user-group, it is best if members of a given user-group are all at about the same level. If you feel that certain students would benefit from different settings, put them into a separate user-group.

To reach the settings dialog (shown in diagram *Teacher 7* below), click on 'Settings' from the main teacher menu (see diagram *Teacher 2* on page 10).

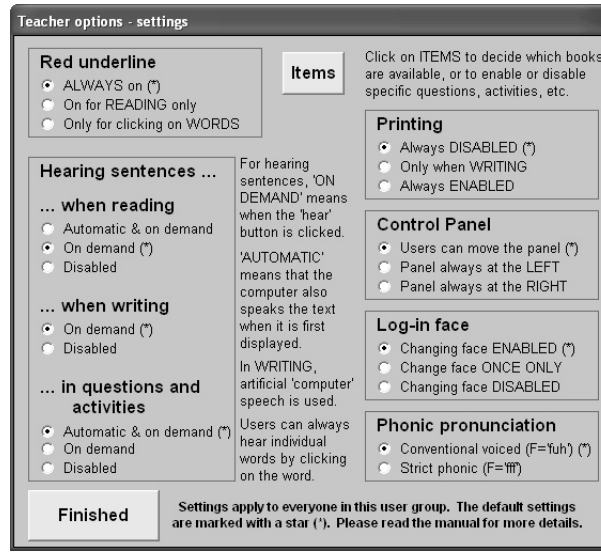
Red underline

A red underline always appears under a word when the student clicks on a single word to hear it. There is also an optional moving red line that underlines each word in turn while the computer speaks the text. The settings allow you to have this moving red underline always enabled (for reading, questions and activities), enabled just for reading, or it can be completely disabled.

Hearing

The software includes recordings of all the text that appears in the books, questions and activities.

If you set hearing to be 'On demand', the computer speaks the text when the student clicks on the 'Hear' button. If you choose 'Automatic', the computer speaks the text when it is first displayed (and will speak it again if the 'Hear' button is clicked).


Teacher options - settings
Red underline
ALWAYS on (*)
On for READING only
Only for clicking on WORDS
Items
Click on ITEMS to decide which books are available, or to enable or disable specific questions, activities, etc.
Printing
Always DISABLED (*)
Only when WRITING
Always ENABLED
Hearing sentences ...
... when reading
Automatic & on demand
On demand (*)
Disabled
... when writing
On demand (*)
Disabled
... in questions and activities
Automatic & on demand (*)
On demand
Disabled
For hearing sentences, 'ON DEMAND' means when the 'hear' button is clicked.
'AUTOMATIC' means that the computer also speaks the text when it is first displayed.
In WRITING, artificial 'computer' speech is used.
Users can always hear individual words by clicking on the word.
Control Panel
Users can move the panel (*)
Panel always at the LEFT
Panel always at the RIGHT
Log-in face
Changing face ENABLED (*)
Change face ONCE ONLY
Changing face DISABLED
Phonic pronunciation
Conventional voiced (F='fuh') (*)
Strict phonic (F='fff')
Finished
Settings apply to everyone in this user group. The default settings are marked with a star (*). Please read the manual for more details.

Teacher 7: settings

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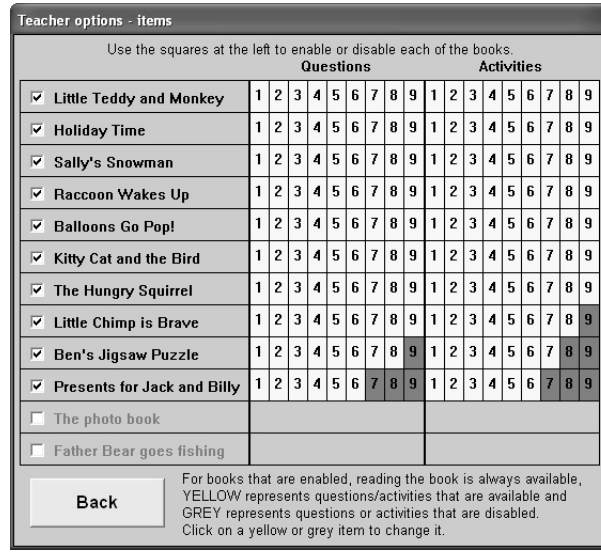
You can also disable hearing, in which case the 'Hear' button will not be shown (though students can still click on an individual word to hear it).

Three different hearing settings are provided — one applies to reading, one applies to questions and activities, and one to writing (where speech is of course not pre-recorded, but uses any text-to-speech engine that your computer has).

Items

It is possible to choose which books are available to the user-group, and also to disable individual questions or activities. You may wish to do this, for example, if certain books or certain questions or activities are too hard for these students.

To do this, click on the 'Items' button (diagram *Teacher 7*). This leads to the dialog illustrated in diagram *Teacher 8* on the right.


Teacher options - items
Use the squares at the left to enable or disable each of the books.
Questions
Activities
Little Teddy and Monkey
Holiday Time
Sally's Snowman
Raccoon Wakes Up
Balloons Go Pop!
Kitty Cat and the Bird
The Hungry Squirrel
Little Chimp is Brave
Ben's Jigsaw Puzzle
Presents for Jack and Billy
The photo book
Father Bear goes fishing
Back
For books that are enabled, reading the book is always available,
YELLOW represents questions/activities that are available and
GREY represents questions or activities that are disabled.
Click on a yellow or grey item to change it.

Teacher 8: individual items

Click on the boxes at the left to enable or disable an entire book. In the diagram, "The photo book" and "Father Bear goes fishing" have been disabled.

For the books that are enabled, students are always able to **read** the book and **write** their own version. Individual **questions** and **activities** can be enabled or disabled by clicking on the appropriate small rectangle. In the diagram, some of the harder questions and activities have been disabled for "Little Chimp is Brave", "Ben's Jigsaw Puzzle" and "Presents for Jack and Billy".

Hint — if you wish to disable a particular question, but are not sure what number it is, go into the software and find the question that you want, then look at the 'question' menu . This will tell you the number of the question. The same applies to activities.

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Control panel

Many of the controls that students use to control the software are held in a 'control panel', shown in diagram *Teacher 9*. This can be placed either at the right or the left of the screen.

Teacher 9: the control panel

By default, students are able to choose whether they want the control panel at the left or right by clicking on the small dark triangles at the top of the panel. The computer will remember each student's preference.

Students often do not notice these triangles for themselves, so you may wish to point out this facility to your students. As a general observation, most right-handed students seem to prefer the control panel at the right, while left-handed students are less predictable.

If you wish, use the settings to force the control panel to be always at the right, or always at the left. If you choose either of these settings, the small triangles will not appear.

Log-in face

Students are able to create their own log-in face by clicking on the 'Change face' button. Most students find this an entertaining activity, and having their individual face helps them find their name at the log-in screen. Choosing a face also serves to introduce students to the control panel, and the idea of clicking on the 'Next' button to proceed.

You may find that students over-use this facility, at the expense of time spent on the rest of the software. The settings let you permit students to use the change-face facility, disable the facility, or allow each student to use it once only.

We recommend that you initially leave the facility enabled, but then disable it after a few days if it is being over-used.

Phonics

Several activities, such as spelling exercises, involve the computer speaking a letter or sound, and two different versions of these sounds are available. Using the letter F as an example, the **name** of the letter is pronounced "eff", but for the **sound** that it makes you can choose between the '**strict phonic**' sound "fff" and the '**conventional voiced**' sound "fuh". While purists may prefer the "fff" sound because it more exactly indicates the sound most often made by the letter F, many teachers prefer the voiced "fuh" sound because it is easier to hear, particularly when played through poor quality speakers or at low volumes.

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Printing

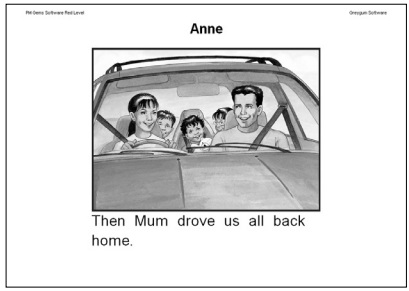
By default printing is disabled, because uncontrolled printing can waste a lot of ink and paper. To enable printing for a particular user group, go into 'Teacher options', click on 'Settings' (see diagram *Teacher 2* on page 10), and look for the 'Printing' section (see diagram *Teacher 7*).

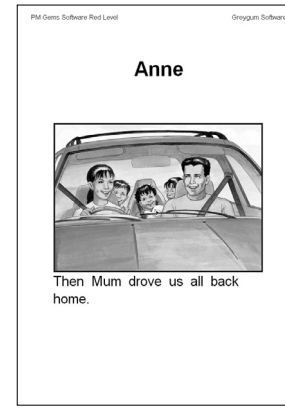
You can choose to enable printing only when students are writing their own stories, or you can choose 'Always enabled' which will permit printing during reading, writing, questions and activities.

Whenever printing is enabled, the software allows you to print the contents of the ***PM Gems*** window (omitting the control panel). To print, click on the 'File' menu, then click on the 'Print' menu item. When young children are using the software, it is recommended that a teacher or other adult should do this, rather than the student.

Note that if printing is disabled but you wish to enable it to print a particular student's work, you can enable printing without losing this work by (on a Windows or Macintosh network) starting the ***PM Gems*** Software on another computer, or (on a stand-alone Windows machine) starting a second copy of the ***PM Gems*** Software; use this other copy of the software to log in as the teacher and alter the printing settings. Then quit this second copy of the software, and go back to the software that the student is using.

In general, landscape orientation prints a slightly larger version of the screen, which therefore gives better quality. The diagram *Teacher 10* shows the result of printing in both portrait and landscape orientation, using Anne's version of a page from 'Holiday Time'.





Teacher 10: the same printout in portrait and landscape

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Creating a new user-group

The remaining option is available via the button in the 'Advanced options' section of the 'Teacher options' menu (see diagram *Teacher 2* on page 10).

It is different from the other options for two reasons:

1. It affects all users of the software package, not just the members of one particular user-group.
2. Using this option involves creating files and folders, so on a network only the network supervisor should use this option.

If you are not yet sure what user-groups are all about, please start by reading the chapter 'Users and user-groups' on page 3.

To create a new user-group, click on the 'Create new user-group' button in the 'Teacher options' menu. On a network, this should be done by the network supervisor, or someone with adequate rights to create new files.

You will be asked to type in a name for the new group. Choose a short name, such as 'Fred's class', and avoid having several groups with names that start similarly (such as 'Year 1' and 'Year 2' and 'Year 3').

The computer will first create a data file for this group. (If it fails to create the file, you probably do not have adequate network rights.)

If it finds an existing file for a group of this name, you will have the choice of scrapping the old file (and losing any data it holds), or keeping the old file. If in doubt, keep the old file (as you can always opt to create the same group again later, and choose to scrap the existing file).

The computer will then create a desktop icon and (for Windows only) a start-menu shortcut (in the program folder of your choice) for the new user group. These shortcuts will have a name like 'PM Red for Fred's class'. (If on a network these shortcuts are not created, it is probably because you have inadequate rights.)

You should then exit from the software, and start it again using one of these new shortcuts. As with a new installation, there will be no teacher password, and the 'users' facility will be turned off. You should go into 'Teacher options', set a teacher password, enable 'users', and type in the names for this new user-group.

The next section describes how to allow access to this new user-group from other workstations on a network, by creating suitable shortcuts (Windows) or aliases (Macinstosh).

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Creating shortcuts

The remaining information is provided for the benefit of network supervisors, who may wish to create shortcuts or menu systems to access the software, or for some other reason may want to know more about how the software is launched.

The software should be launched via a shortcut (Windows) or alias (Mac).

Each user-group has its own shortcut for starting the software, and its own data file. This data file records the teacher password for this group, the settings, and also the name and the progress of every user in the group.

The data files are kept in a folder called 'User_PGR' (for the PM Gems Red software, and similar names for the other colours). It is essential that all users have read and write access to this data, and that the location is the same for all users.

Windows: The location of this folder is whatever you selected when the software was installed (as the location for data files to which the computer writes). All shortcuts to the software will specify this location in their 'Start in' field — not to be confused with the 'Target' field, which will point to the executable file. The 'Start in' field should point to the location that contains the 'User_PGR' folder.

Macintosh: This folder will by default be found in the installation folder, though you may choose to move it somewhere else.

For the Red level, when the software is installed there is just one data file ('default.dat' for Windows, or 'PM Red' for Macintosh) and the corresponding shortcut is 'PM Red'. For each new user-group that is created, such as 'Fred's class', there will be a new shortcut 'PM Red for Fred's class' and a new data file in the 'User_PGR' folder (with the same name 'PM Red for Fred's class' on Macintosh computers, but on Windows computers it will have an abbreviated name and the '.dat' extension, such as 'FREDS_36.DAT').

To delete a user-group, remove all its shortcuts to prevent access, and delete the corresponding data file (optionally first making a backup copy of it, just in case a teacher later wants access to the data it contains).

The shortcuts (created either at installation or when a new user-group is made) exist only on the workstation in use at the time. To use the software from other workstations, the network supervisor should create similar shortcuts on other workstations. You may of course wish to put shortcuts only on certain machines (such as shortcuts to the 'Fred's class' user-group only on computers in Fred's classroom.)

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Windows

The software must be started using a shortcut that specifies both the 'Target' and the 'Start in' folder. If it is launched by directly running the executable, it will not be able to find its data files.

The 'Target' field of all shortcuts should point to PM_Red.EXE (or similar names for other colours) in the installation folder (i.e. where you elected to put the program files when you installed the software).

For a particular user-group 'Fred's class', add the command-line argument

/group:Fred's class

so that the full target of the shortcut might be

\\server\Greygum\PmRed\PM_Red.EXE /group:Fred's class

The 'Start in' field of the shortcut should point to the folder that contains, for Red level, the User_PGR folder (i.e. where you elected, during installation, to put the data files to which the software writes).

If you need to alter the location of the data files, move the entire User_PGR folder to a new location, and alter all shortcuts so that the 'Start in' field points to this new location.

Macintosh

The software should be launched via a data file rather than by directly starting the executable. So to launch the software without using an alias, navigate to the User_PGR folder (for Red level) and double-click on the required data file.

An alias to the relevant data file is created on the desktop when the software is installed and (optionally) when each new user-group is created. The network supervisor should create similar aliases on other workstations as required, and we recommend that these aliases should be created individually rather than copied.

If you wish, you may change the location of the data files. Move the User_PGR folder to a new location. After this, existing aliases may no longer point to the correct location. If necessary, they should be re-directed by selecting the alias, choosing File/Get Info, then selecting "Select New Original".

For this reason we recommend that, if you wish to change the location of the data files, you do this before creating new user-groups.

If, as a result of changing their location, the data files are on a different volume from the installation folder, ensure that both volumes are mounted on all workstations that wish to use the software.

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Driving the software

The main controls

In nearly all situations, students control the software by clicking on control buttons. Many of these buttons are grouped into a 'control panel', which students can choose to place either on the left or on the right of the screen.

Because of the difficulty some very young users have controlling the mouse, these buttons are generally large and obvious, they become highlighted when the mouse passes over them, and users can (if their mouse has two or more buttons) use **either the left or the right mouse button** when clicking on these buttons.

Some of the buttons are shown in diagram *Driving 1*. Students generally learn quickly how to use the controls, but occasionally may need help with the idea that they should:

Driving 1: control buttons

- use the 'Next' button to proceed to the next page, question or activity,
- click on a 'finger' button to select an answer to a question.

Students should also be told that, as well as clicking on the 'Hear' button to hear a whole phrase or sentence, they can also **click on an individual word** to hear it spoken. This is an extremely useful facility for children who can read much of the text, but need assistance with a few of the words.

Dragging with the mouse

The menu screens, reading, and the questions are controlled entirely by clicking on buttons. In many of the activities, students also need to drag an object or some text around the screen.

Because some young children find it difficult to move the mouse while keeping a button pressed, the software provides two methods of dragging. The software automatically accepts whichever method is used — some children even unconsciously switch between the two methods.

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Normal dragging

Point to the object that is to be dragged, then press and hold down the mouse button. Move the mouse to the required new position, then release the button. (This is of course how mouse-dragging normally works.)

Alternative dragging

Point to the object that is to be dragged and then click (press and release the mouse button). The object will become "stuck" to the mouse. Move the mouse around until the object is in the required new position, then click (press and release) a second time to drop the object. Some younger children find this method easier.

Choosing a face

If 'Users' is enabled (see 'Teacher options — Managing users' on page 11), children must log in by name when they start using the software. They will see a number of buttons each with a face on it and a name underneath. There will be one button for each member of the user-group, plus one for the teacher.

While almost all children can recognise their own name, some may take a while to find their name if there are a lot of children in the user-group. The software therefore allows them to customise the face that appears on their log-in button, to make it easier for them to find.

We recommend that when young children use the software for the first time, they should be helped to log in, and then should be encouraged to customise their log-in face immediately. To start this process, they should click on the 'Change face' button in the main menu, shown in diagram *Driving 2*. (Note that this button does not appear when the teacher uses the software — the 'Teacher options' button appears instead.)

Driving 2: changing face

As well as being an entertaining activity in its own right, this face-changing serves two very useful purposes:

- It allows children to become familiar with using the software, with clicking on buttons, and in particular with the idea of using the 'Next' button to move on from one stage to the next.
- It makes it easier for children to find their own log-in button in future.

Teachers who find that students are using this face-change facility too much can use 'Teacher options' to disable or limit its use (see 'Log-in face' on page 16).

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Menu items

The ***PM Gems*** Software also provides some menu items, which are generally intended for adult use rather than for student use. The various menu items are as follows.

File → Change user

Use this when one student stops using the software, and another student (from the same user-group) wants to start. It is equivalent to quitting the software and then restarting it, but it achieves this more quickly.

File → Print

This allows the current screen to be printed. By default printing is disabled. Refer to page 17 for more details, such as how to enable printing.

The print menu leads to a dialog that on Windows computers allows you to choose a printer, and to set such details as the print quality and the page orientation (portrait or landscape) for the selected printer, before finally deciding to proceed with printing or to cancel.

On Macintosh computers, much the same applies except that it is not possible to choose the page orientation (portrait or landscape) from the print dialog. There is a separate menu item (File → Page Setup) for choosing the page orientation.

File → Hear whole book

This menu item is intended chiefly for use by the teacher. It is enabled only during reading and writing, and it causes the computer to work through an entire book, showing each page in turn, speaking the text of each page as it is displayed.

This facility can be very useful when a teacher wishes to read through a book with the whole class before they tackle the questions and activities, or to show the class a story written by a student.

The computer will start by reading the text of the page currently being displayed (which would generally be the first page). It will then automatically turn to the next page, read the text for that page, and so on through to the end of the book. If you want to stop the process before the last page is reached, click on the 'Menu' button or the 'Back' button.

When used with writing rather than reading, the computer will speak using any artificial text-to-speech engine that is available (see page 9).

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File → Open / Load original story / Save / Save As

These menu items are relevant only when students are writing their own version of a story. The 'Open', 'Save', and 'Save As' items behave as in any other software, and allow the text that the student has written to be saved or opened. The text is saved as straight text, so that the saved file can be also be loaded into any text editor or word processor. On a network, students should choose an appropriate folder (to which they are permitted to write files) to save their story.

Note that it is unwise to alter the saved text in some other application and then attempt to open the altered version back into the ***PM Gems*** Software, or to try to open the text written for one story when a different story has been selected. The results may look rather odd!

Rather than starting with blank pages, students can use the 'Load original story' menu item to load the text as it appears in the original printed book, which they can then alter to create their own version.

File → Exit

Students can use this to quit at any time. However, we recommend that students should quit by returning to the main menu, then using the 'Exit' button.

In accordance with the conventions for different operating systems, this item appears as File → Exit in Windows, but in Mac OS X it appears as 'Quit PM Red' in the 'PM Red' menu (and similarly for other colours).

The Page, Question or Activity menu

The name of this menu will vary according to whether the student is reading, writing, answering questions, or doing activities. Generally, students should work through in order, using the 'Next' button to move on to the next page, question or activity. However, this menu makes it possible to jump directly to a particular page, question or activity.

The Help menu

There are two items in this menu.

- 'About PM Gems Software' shows the version number of the software, and provides various useful web and email addresses.
- 'Manual (as PDF file)' allows the 'Installation and user guide', provided in printed form with the software, to be viewed at the computer as a pdf file. (This requires the public-domain software Acrobat Reader).

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Special needs

The ***PM Gems*** Software is, in all situations other than the 'Teacher options' and 'Writing', controlled by the mouse. In all menu screens, choosing a log-in face, and during 'Reading' and 'Questions', users drive the software by clicking on control buttons. In 'Activities', users also click on objects and drag them around the screen. Any special needs device that emulates these mouse functions can therefore be used to drive these sections of the software.

Touch screens

All aspects of the ***PM Gems*** Software, with the exception of the 'Teacher options' and 'Writing', can be controlled using a touch screen. To activate any button, just touch the button. To hear a word, touch the word. In 'Activities', drag an object by touching the object to pick it up, then touching again where you wish to drop the object.

Double-switch devices

The Windows version of the ***PM Gems*** Software allows limited keyboard control. Hitting the TAB key will cause the mouse-pointer to move to one of the control buttons, highlighting that control, and further TAB keypresses will move the mouse-pointer through all the available controls, highlighting each in turn. The ENTER or SPACE keys, if hit while one of the control buttons is highlighted, are equivalent to clicking the mouse on that control.

This facility allows limited control of the software by a double-switch device. Make one switch equivalent to hitting the TAB key, and use this to move through the various control buttons in turn. Make the other switch equivalent to hitting the ENTER or SPACE key, and use this to activate the required control button. This allows control of the menus, face-changing, and the 'Reading' and 'Questions' sections of the software. It does not, however, allow the 'Activities' or 'Writing' sections to be adequately controlled.

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